

## EVALUATION OF THE REGIONAL PUBLIC AUTHORITIES' ACTIVITIES

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### Abstract

The society expects from the public authorities an effective and responsible decisions. An unsolved task is to develop a methodology for ensuring adequate assessment of results and costs. The article shows evaluation methods of the public authorities' activities. The authors propose indicators that meet current trends, e.g. the concept of sustainable development. The method of qualitative analysis was used to find out the transformation assessment of the public activities. The system of balanced indicators allows to link strategic goals and key indicators that measure the degree of their achievement in the regions.

**Key words:** evaluation, management, public authorities, region.

**JEL Classification:** C13, H70, R58.

### Introduction

Regional public authorities and local self-government institutions have unique skills, responsibilities and resources, with which they can contribute to the ultimate goal of fighting poverty and enhancing social and economic inclusion. Particularly in times of economic and financial crisis, citizens in general, aspire to see concrete results in exchange of their financial and development support.

Society expects from the public authorities an effective and responsible management aimed at meeting both its needs and the needs of individual citizens. A systematic and objective assessment of the public authorities' activities is one of the main conditions for increasing their socially useful activities and responsibilities, as well as accelerating the pace of socio-economic development of regions. Therefore, in recent

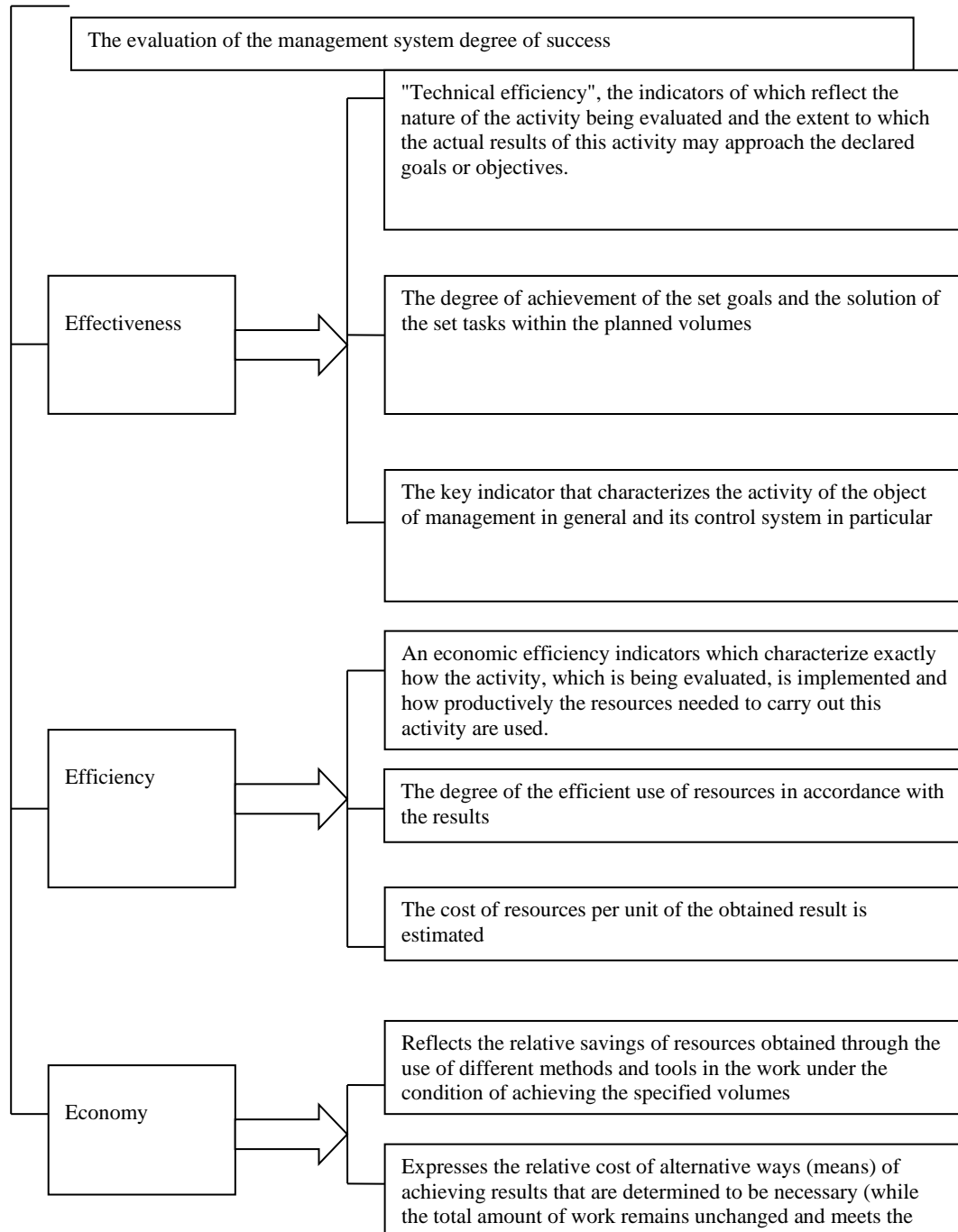
decades, discussions on the use of quality and efficiency indicators for objectively assessment of the performance of public administration have intensified.

The question of the evaluation of the management effectiveness in general is reflected in the works of P. Drucker, who emphasized that these days, practically all of us work for a managed institution, large or small, business or nonbusiness. We depend on management for our livelihoods. And our ability to contribute to society also depends as much on the management of the organization for which we work as it does on our own skills, dedication, and effort (Drucker, P., 2001; Peters T. and Waterman Jr., 2010), reveal the concept of successful management through continuous innovation, the works of other scientists also consider this issue.

A generalized approach to assessment of the degree of success of the management system combines three main components,

Figure 1 Scientists follow a general approach to determining the success of management, which is based on the ratio of performance to the costs associated with ensuring these results. But so far any methods have not been

developed to ensure adequate and objective evaluation, both of the results and corresponding costs, as well as the comparability of the obtained estimates.



**Figure 1. A generalized approach to the assessment of the degree of the management system success (According to Manzoor, 2014; Meier, 2010; Rutgers, 2010; Yang, 2007)**

The theory and methodology of public administration evaluation is actively developing in the United States. The experience of evaluation in education, public

health and hygiene, the country received before the First World War. But the most turbulent period came in the 1960s according to (Hiraki, 2009). At this time in the Johnson

administration the US federal government pursued a policy using the slogan "War on Poverty." This has led to the creation of the measurement of efficiency as a scientific method of governance, which has traditionally been developed in the study of public administration in the United States, and its spread since the 90s on the background of the spread of so-called "new public administration". Now this approach is being implemented in administrative institutions all over the world. Moreover, a variety of institutions are involved in its implementation, both in the central and local governments.

The current trend in assessing the quality of public authority is to build quality management systems in accordance with the requirements of international standards ISO 9001:2015. The basis of the quality management systems standards is formed by seven principles: customer orientation; leadership; staff involvement; process approach; improvement; making decisions based on factual data; relationship management. The requirements of the standard on the responsibility of management, analysis and control of business processes, actions to improve this activity, development of management system documentation create a basis for the formation of local government, which is focused on the customer (the citizen). In Ukraine, local governments were the first among the authorities to introduce the ISO system. Implementation and certification of quality management systems in accordance with this standard leads to increased efficiency and consistency of work, more rational use of resources, focus on consumers and, consequently, increase of the customer satisfaction (Quality management systems according to ISO 9001, 2015).

Since 2000, the Common Assessment Framework (hereinafter - the CAF model) has been widely used in EU member states as well as in EU candidate countries

(Common..., 2020). The CAF model is an adaptation of the well-known business model for self-assessment of the European Foundation for Quality Management - the EFQM model of excellence. The overall CAF evaluation scheme is being developed for the public sector and the public and municipal administration of Europe under the auspices of the European Commission. The CAF model has proven to be a simple and effective tool for evaluating, analyzing and improving the efficiency of the civil service, as evidenced by the experience of more than 900 organizations in the field of public and municipal government. Between 2003 and 2006, about 30 European countries included CAF in their national strategic programs to improve the quality and efficiency of public administration. In 15 countries, the application of CAF is a recommendation for public authorities, and in three countries - the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Romania - is mandatory.

The CAF model is positioned as a mechanism for examining the activities of public authorities and local governments on the basis of diagnostic self-assessment, as a tool for comparative analysis of institutional systems of European countries, which includes identification of the best practices, and as part of public and municipal governance reform programs. The general evaluation scheme is designed specifically for the public sector, taking into account its specifics and in order to achieve the following objectives:

- Introduce the principles of quality management in the field of public administration and promote their deployment through the method of self-assessment. Facilitate the transition from the "plan - do" chain to the "plan - do - test - influence" cycle (PDCA continuous improvement cycle).

- Provide a mechanism for self-assessment and diagnose of the strengths and weaknesses, identify areas for improvement.

-Become an element between different approaches to quality-based management.

-Ensure the exchange of experiences and the study of the best management practices for the public sector.

The CAF model includes two groups of evaluation indicators: the "Opportunities" group characterizes the approaches used by the organization to achieve results and increase efficiency; group "Results" characterizes the achievements of the organization. The nine key CAF indicators, which meet the criteria of the General Assessment Scheme, combine 28 components and about 150 evaluation areas. Today, the development of CAF is facilitated by the cooperation of users of the model within the European Network of Public Administration EUPAN, created at the CAF resource center.

Public assessment of the local self-government effectiveness is common. Such assessment includes evaluation and control, in particular on such issues as, for example, the adoption of certain management decisions by public authorities, as well as the progress of their implementation; targeted and economical spending of resources and public funds; ensuring environmental safety, as well as preserving human life and health; quality and volume of public services provided, implementation of priority national programs and projects, etc. Taking into account the impact of the public opinion and its evaluation on the process of determining the effectiveness of public administration is carried out by implementing a system of its monitoring and taking into account its effects and their consequences. For example, in the countries of the European Union, the practice of introducing "Smart City" technology, which provides, in particular, governance with the broad participation of citizens, is widespread. The list of already implemented services allows citizens to monitor and control around the clock: electronic auctions, electronic market analysis, electronic bidding, electronic auction card, mayor's diary, details of the city budget and assets, city grants, a single emergency control center (fire service, patrol police, ambulance); online processing of various appeals of citizens (European

Smart..., 2020). Such tools as electronic opinion polls or online citizens' notes / appeals make it possible to study citizens' opinions and take them into account when planning local development. The Best Value system was developed in the UK as a program for improving the quality of local government activities, and it's the most important aspect is the cooperation of local authorities with the public, as public consultation is a key element in many issues of improving the quality of services. Not only the quality of services is discussed with citizens, but also the list of services, their goals and quality standards, according to which services are provided. In addition to discussions, the form of citizen involvement is cooperation in the process of providing services. As a result, a significant number of services are provided to local businesses on a contractual basis (not by local authorities, but by community residents). Consulting with the local businesses is an officially approved requirement of the Best Quality program. The need for feedback between the community and the government is identified as one of the most important aspects of success in achieving the best quality of services. Public consultation is important at the budget planning stage of the service delivery process, as the financial responsibility for the services provided rests with the local government and, consequently, with the community as a whole according to (Kovbasuk, 2014). Since 2001, Canada has used a model called the Community-Based Monitoring System. Such monitoring is defined by experts as a process of cooperation between the public, government agencies, industry, academics, community groups and local institutions to adequately respond to local development processes, address existing problems and promote full cooperation between citizens and government, strengthen citizen involvement in the adoption process of the management decisions at the local level (Quinn, 2005).

Balanced Scorecard has become a promising rating system for the new generation, the result of many years of work which is led by Robert Kaplan, a professor at Harvard Business School, and David Norton,

founder and president of Balanced Scorecard Collaborative. The Balanced Scorecard system, developed for business companies, is gaining popularity among public administration institutions and takes into account four “perspectives” of the organization: traditional financial (Financial) indicators and factors that directly or indirectly affect them, the success of customer service (Customer), optimality of internal business processes (Internal Process) and general competence of the company's staff in its field (Learning & Growth / Employees). Taken together, these perspectives provide a holistic picture of the organization's current strategy and dynamics. If necessary, additional kits of own development can be introduced and used, for example "Ecology" and others (Norton, 1996). Periodic measurements of indicators provide feedback and appropriate regulation of the organization's actions. The degree of achievement of goals, the efficiency of business processes and the work of the entire company, its departments and each employee is determined by the values of the so-called “key performance indicators” (KPI). If they are related to the employee motivation system, it is expected that the latter will be interested in achieving the company's goals on a daily basis. Thus, Balanced Scorecard become a kind of “framework” for transforming the strategy of the organization into a set of operational goals that determine the company's behavior and, consequently, its financial well-being.

The purpose of the research is to show the ways of objective assessment of the activities of public authorities, as one of the main conditions for increasing their socially useful activities and responsibilities, accelerating the pace of socio-economic development of the regions. A literature review was also conducted to find factors explaining the current situation

The object of the research is the processes of the transformation assessment of the activities of public authorities under the influence of the development of a new model of the local development management. The subject of the research is the indicators of socio-economic development of the Mykolaiv region.

### **Research methodology**

The methodology of the research is based on a systematic approach, according to which the regions is considered as an open social and economic system. The method of qualitative analysis was used to find out the transformation assessment of the activities of public authorities in this study. The qualitative research tries to explore effectiveness public authorities and gives a chance to the researchers who want to have a look at insider perspective in detail. The argumentation of the conclusions drawn is based on the analytical indicators of social and economic development of regions of Ukraine 2019. The articles and analytical materials in the field of regional development of other scholars became the sources of information. The methodology used contributed to the solution of the task and the preconditions for overcoming the challenges of sustainable development of the regions in Ukraine.

### **Results**

Ukraine has not yet formed a legal framework that can comprehensively regulate monitoring and evaluation in the field of public administration. In the world practice, these processes are usually regulated by laws on strategic planning. The Law of Ukraine “On State Targeted Programs” adopted in 2004 does not mention monitoring and evaluation. The Law of Ukraine “On Principles of State Regional Policy” adopted

in 2015 introduced the concept of monitoring and evaluation: monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of state regional policy implementation is a periodic monitoring of the relevant indicators based on official statistics and information of central executive bodies, local governments and on the basis of monitoring data, evaluation of the effectiveness of indicators by comparing the obtained results with their target values.

Evaluation become increasingly important for the activities of public administration bodies in Ukraine. The current monitoring practice does not provide complete unbiased information for an objective assessment of the activities of public administration bodies. For example, focusing on the Strategy of development of the Mykolaiv area for the period till 2020 (Strategy of the Mykolaiv region, 2020) we will note that Section 5. - Implementation and monitoring of the Strategy implementation contains subsection "Monitoring of the strategy implementation". The proposed procedure has several shortcomings: there is no independent monitoring of the development strategies implementation, no participation in the monitoring carried out by government officials, experts, initiative groups, NGOs, and public councils. The imperfection of the monitoring methodology allows the authorities to formulate the results of the monitoring according to their needs and tasks. Monitoring and evaluation of the regional development strategies is carried out on the basis of documents of central authorities. The quality of the monitoring system of the regional development strategy, as a rule, does not allow to effectively manage the implementation of these documents.

Using criterion and indicative approaches for assessment of the regional government system activities, based on information from the Report about the implementation of the State Strategy for Regional Development of Ukraine for 2019, for which the Mykolaiv Regional State Administration is responsible (Report..., 2019), the authors calculated specific criteria ( $K_i$ ,  $n$ ) and generalized criterion ( $K$ ), table 1. The specific criterion for the evaluating the

activities of public authorities in the field of regional development was determined by special evaluation indicators specified in the system of indicators for evaluating the activities of a particular government body.

The specific criterion for evaluating the activities of public authorities is calculated by the formula (1):  $K_i = F_i / P_i$ , (1) where  $K_i$  is a specific criterion for evaluating the activities of public authorities;  $F_i$  is the actual achieved value of the  $i$ -the indicator;  $P_i$  is the predicted value of the  $i$ -th indicator. If the desired result is a decrease in the value of any indicator (for example, the level of registered unemployment, the calculation of a specific criterion is carried out according to the formula) (2):  $K_i = P_i / F_i$ , (2) The final evaluation of public authorities was based on calculation generalized criterion ( $K$ ). The calculation was carried out according to the formula (3):  $K = \text{The sum of } K_i \cdot k_i / i$ , (3), where  $k_i$  is a weighting factor for the certain indicator in the index defined by the expert method based on the authors' research. After the initial processing of information and obtaining the values of the generalized criterion ( $K$ ) for each of the evaluated subjects, these values were compared with one. When the obtained  $K$  is more than 1.1, the activity of the subject of assessment is considered highly effective, when  $K = 1 \pm 0.1$  - effective, when  $K = 0.8 \pm 0.1$  - inefficient, when  $K$  is less than 0.7 - ineffective. The calculation of the aggregate index showed that the activity of the subject of evaluation should be considered effective.

The analysis of the draft Development Strategy of the Mykolaiv region for the period 2021-2027 (The draft Development Strategy of the Mykolaiv region, 2020) revealed the absence of a separate section where the features of monitoring and evaluation are disclosed, but the necessary information is included in Section 6. Consistency of strategy with program and strategic documents, which stipulates that monitoring reports are open documents and are used to clarify the tasks and budget programs of the region for the next budget year, and also that the form of the monitoring report, responsible authority for its preparation as well as



submission deadlines determines regional powers and structure.  
state administration in accordance with its

**Table 1. The evaluation of regional public authorities' activity according to the indicators of the Mykolaiv region in 2019. Compiled by the author on the basis of: (Report on the tasks implementation..., 2019)**

Specific evaluation criteria	Forecasted value	Actual value	Weighting factor	Index
<b>Increasing of the region competitiveness level</b>				
Gross regional product (actual prices) per capita, UAH	37391	60 549	0,1	1,8
Volume of the sold innovative products,% of the total volume of sold industrial products	0,6	1	0,1	1,9
Number of small enterprises per 10 thousand of the available population, units	92	98	0,1	1,2
Disposable income per person, hryvnia	37995	55 544	0,07	1,6
The volume of foreign direct investment per capita, USD	232	223	0,06	1,1
The volume of exports per capita, USD	1667	1 913	0,07	1,2
<b>Territorial socio-economic integration and spatial development</b>				
Demographic burden of the population aged 16-59 per 1 thousand permanent residents, ppm	641	659	0,08	1,1
Total coefficient of the outflow of rural population (outflow from rural areas per 1 thousand of available rural population), ppm	6	6	0,1	1,1
Total mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 population), ppm	13,9	15	0,07	1,2
The unemployment rate of the population aged 15-70, determined by the ILO methodology,%	8,2	9	0,05	1,2
Density of public roads of state and local importance with a hard surface, kilometers of roads per 1 thousand square meters. kilometers	194,5	195	0,1	1,1
The share of recycled waste, % of total waste generated	5	3	0,05	0,5
The share of the area of the nature reserve fund, % of the area of the administrative-territorial unit	7	3	0,05	0,4
Generalized criterion			1	1,2

When comparing the Strategy of development of the Mykolaiv region for the period till 2020 and the developed project of the Development Strategy of the Mykolaiv region for the period of 2021-2027 absence of accurately formulated purposes and indicators which would correspond to SMART parameters Specific (Concrete); Measurable; Achievable; Relevant; Time bound

(Weakness of time) is traced,as well as weakness of the information collection system, lack of procedures for monitoring and analysis of the information. It is necessary to create an integrated information and communication system of region, the main components of which will be: developed infrastructure for access to information; the information systems of local self-government bodies; the informational monitoring systems;

e-commerce and marketing systems; the informational and consulting electronic services; distance learning and retraining systems (Honcharenko, 2018). The development of informatisation and telecommunications of regions will enable to achieve significant results in social and economic activity of society at the expense of a clearer organization, economical spending of all kinds of resources (material, energy, labor, financial, etc.), improvement of working conditions and life of the population. The task of assessment of the public authorities' activities seems to require great attention from scholars and practitioners of public administration. Currently in the world practice of strategic management the most effective tool for implementing the strategy is a system of balanced scores. Obviously, it is impossible to achieve what cannot be measured. Therefore, in order to implement the set strategic tasks, the main target indicators of sustainable socio-economic development of the community must be identified and targeted. The system of balanced scores allows you to link strategic goals and key indicators that measure the degree of their achievement, identify and track cause and effect relationships and relationships between key financial and non-financial indicators.

The name of the system reflects the balance or equilibrium that can be achieved between:

- long-term and short-term goals of the development strategy;

- financial and non-financial indicators;
- indicators of the upper and lower hierarchical levels of the strategy;

- internal and external sources and factors of strategy implementation. Key performance indicators in the system should be measurable and formalized in a single reporting system according to the following criteria:

- be relatively simple and unambiguous in interpretation;

- have optimal, threshold, critical values for comparison and control over their implementation;

- be able to make a comparative assessment in time dynamics;

- be updated on a regular basis;

- be representative for comparisons;

- be able to be included in economic and mathematical models, information systems and forecasting systems.

The number of key performance indicators selected should be limited. It is impossible to make effective management decisions based on the analysis of too many indicators. In each section shall be defined such indicators, which are both highly depend on the actions of authorities and reflect the most important spheres of citizen's life and additionally reflects the projection for the future development of the region. To achieve the strategic goals and objectives of the regional development, the following indicators are proposed, table.2.

**Table 2. Key indicators of the regional development**

Tasks	Name of the indicator	Units of measurement
Economic and financial stability	Growth rate of the labor productivity	%
	Index of economic innovation	index
	Number of created and modernized work places	units
	Level of competitiveness	index
Institutional development	Terms of doing business	point
	Quality of the local government	point
	Development of e-government	point
Social transformations	The share of the population with incomes below the subsistence level	%
	Unemployment rate	%
	Minimum income level	UAH
Environmental responsibility and energy efficiency	Number of pollution sources	units
	Reducing of the energy intensity of the economy	%
	Reducing the energy intensity of the economy	point



Economic and financial indicators are quite simple to define and widely used, (Posner PL, Fantone D., 2010; Soininen T., 2013). But if we focus only on them, it is not necessary to even be interested in ensuring that investments improve the welfare of citizens. Therefore, development strategies need to be assessed both by the degree of achievement of previously set goals and by the extent to which the set goals are justified in terms of the existing social problems.

### Conclusions

In Ukraine achieving of the progress towards the formation of a perfect system for evaluating the activities of public authorities includes monitoring of the obtained results, their comparison with the forecast and plan at clearly defined costs. It involves the use of a set of indicators, in particular: indicators that characterise economic and financial sustainability, which assess institutional development, social transformation, environmental responsibility and energy efficiency.

Using criterion and indicative approaches for assessment of the regional

government system activities, based on information from the Report about the implementation of the State Strategy for Regional Development of Ukraine for 2019, for which the Mykolaiv Regional State Administration is responsible, the authors calculated specific criteria and generalized criterion. The specific criterion for the evaluating the activities of public authorities in the field of regional development was determined by special evaluation indicators specified in the system of indicators for evaluating the activities of a particular government body. The calculation of the aggregate index showed that the activity of the subject of evaluation should be considered effective.

The influence of the public opinion makes any management process more or less public, so it is necessary to intensify the process of the public monitoring of the public service delivery, public activities, institutions and civil society organizations for constant, periodic or one-time monitoring of the strategies implementation by public authorities with further response or accumulation of information for further consideration.

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